

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SS-15 SP-02 PA-01 /039 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6934
USIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, SCUL, GE, US
SUBJECT: PAUL STRAND EXHIBIT: DCM CALL AT MFA

REF: (A) STATE 64063; (B) STATE 63405;
- (C) BERLIN 1787

1. DCM PAID CALL AFTERNOON MARCH 15 ON GDR MFA
USA DESK OFFICER ELM, WHO TOOK INITIATIVE IN RAISING
PAUL STRAND EXHIBIT PROBLEM AFTER GIVING DCM NOTE ON
FEININGER PAINTINGS (REPORTED SEPTEL). ELM ALLUDED
TO EARLIER DISCUSSION WITH DCM AND TO GOODBY-SIEBER
MEETING, SAYING THAT MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH
KULTURBUND. THE GDR WISHED TO FIND AN ACCEPTABLE
SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. THEIR PROPOSAL, AGREED TO
BETWEEN MFA AND KULTURBUND, WAS TO HAVE NAME AND
TITLE OF KULTURBUND OFFICIAL APPEAR ON PRINTED
INVITATION/PROGRAM. WHILE AMBASSADOR'S NAME/TITLE
WOULD NOT RPT. NOT APPEAR ON PROGRAM, HE WOULD BE
ASKED TO SPEAK AND WOULD BE INTRODUCED ORALLY BY
"SHORT FORM" OF HIS TITLE, I.E., WITHOUT ANY MENTION
OF "IN", "ZU", "BEI", ETC. ELM ADDED, BY WAY OF
EXPLANATION, THAT SINCE BOTH THE GDR AND USA HAVE
DIFFERENT POSITIONS ON THE "PRINCIPLE
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QUESTION" OF BERLIN, AND THAT THE "SHORT FORM" OF THE
AMBASSADOR'S TITLE DOES NOT CONFORM TO NORMAL PRACTICE IN
THE GDR, THE MINISTRY BELIEVED THE SOLUTION HE WAS
PROPOSING WOULD BE AN ACCEPTABLE "AD HOC" ONE TO A
PRACTICAL PROBLEM. HE SAID THAT ON THE OCCASION OF
THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE USA, THE GDR HAD PUT ON
A PROGRAM AT WHICH FORMER AMBASSADOR COOPER HAD

SPOKEN, AND THAT HIS NAME HAD NOT APPEARED ON THE PROGRAM. ELM EXPRESSED THE HOPE THEIR PROPOSAL THEREFORE WOULD BE SATISFACTORY TO US AND THAT IT NOT BE NECESSARY EVENTUALLY TO CANCEL THE EXHIBIT.

2. IN REPLY, DCM EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR ELM'S REMARKS, NOTING WE ALSO WISHED TO FIND PRACTICAL, ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO PROBLEM. THERE HAS BEEN TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF SINCERE, CONSTRUCTIVE COOPERATION BY BOTH SIDES IN BRINGING EXHIBIT TO PRESENT STAGE OF READINESS. IT WAS OUR DESIRE TO TRY TO FIND SOLUTION THAT WOULD ENABLE EXHIBIT TO TAKE PLACE WITHOUT, AT SAME TIME, DOING DAMAGE TO EITHER SIDE'S POSITION, HIGHLIGHTING OUR DIFFERENCES, OR CREATING UNNECESSARY OBSTACLES IN OUR RELATIONS. IN OUR VIEW, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE BEST WAY TO DO SO WOULD BE TO REFER TO THE AMBASSADOR AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, WITHOUT ANY PREPOSITION, AS DEP. ASST. SECY. GOODBY HAD SUGGESTED TO AMB. SIEBER. THIS WOULD NEITHER HIGHLIGHT DIFFERENCES NOR DO DAMAGE TO EITHER SIDE'S POSITION.

3. WITH RESPECT TO THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY EXAMPLE ELM HAD REFERRED TO, DCM SAID HE WAS NOT HERE AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE TIME. IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING, HOWEVER, THAT THE PROGRAM WAS ONE PUT ON ENTIRELY BY THE GDR. THE EMBASSY HAD NOT BEEN INVOLVED. THE SITUATIONS WERE NOT COMPARABLE. (COMMENT: CHECK WITHIN EMBASSY REVEALED THAT AMB. COOPER WAS LAST MINUTE INVITEE TO US-GDR FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY OBSERVATION AND ASKED TO SPEAK AFTER HIS ARRIVAL. END COMMENT.)

4. CONCERNING ELM'S PROPOSED SOLUTION, DCM SAID USG AND THE EMBASSY HAD BEEN DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN PREPARATIONS FOR THE EXHIBIT. WE HAD ACCEPTED THE KULTURBUND'S OFFER TO HAVE THE AMBASSADOR MAKE REMARKS AT THE OPENING. IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE AND DEMEANING, KNOWING THE AMBASSADOR WOULD SPEAK, NOT TO HAVE HIS NAME AND TITLE ON THE INVITATION/ PROGRAM. DCM DOUBTED THAT GDR EMBASSY COULD AGREE TO ANY SUCH ARRANGEMENT IN US IF CONFRONTED WITH A COMPARABLE SITUATION. THE SUGGESTION DCM HAD MADE AT MARCH 10 MEETING, I.E. NOT HAVE NAMES/TITLE OF EITHER SPEAKER (NOT JUST OF AMBASSADOR) ON INVITATION/PROGRAM HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITHIN EMBASSY AS WAY OF TRYING TO FIND A TOLERABLE

SOLUTION. DCM SAID THAT, ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE DEPT, HE COULD SAY THAT SUCH A SOLUTION WAS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE ONE TO US SIDE, AND THEREFORE ELM'S PROPOSAL ALSO WAS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE ONE.

5. DCM SAID HE WAS CONVINCED BOTH SIDES WERE SINCERELY TRYING TO FIND MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO A DIFFICULT PROBLEM. WE THOUGHT OUR PROPOSAL TO USE "SHORT FORM" OF AMBASSADOR'S TITLE WAS EASIEST AND PREFERRED SOLUTION SINCE IT DID NOT DO DAMAGE TO EITHER SIDE'S POSITION AND WOULD NOT DRAW PARTICULAR ATTENTION. GDR PRESS TODAY,

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O 152012Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6935

USIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

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MARCH 15, HAD USED "SHORT FORM" OF ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR'S TITLE IN REPORTING ON HIS FAREWELL CALL ON HONECKER. WE WOULD HOPE GDR COULD USE SAME FLEXIBILITY IN CONNECTION WITH AMBASSADOR'S TITLE AS WAY OUT OF PRESENT PROBLEM. IF GDR WAS NOT PREPARED TO GIVE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION TO OUR PROPOSAL AND COULD GO NO FARTHER THAN THE ONE ELM HAD MADE, DCM SAID THAT, SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS, THE US WOULD REGRETTABLY HAVE TO CANCEL THE EXHIBIT. IN OUR VIEW, THIS WOULD NOT BE THROUGH ANY FAULT OF OURS. FURTHERMORE, SHOULD IT PROVE NECESSARY TO CANCEL THE EXHIBIT, THE US WOULD HAVE TO EXAMINE MORE CAREFULLY THOSE ASPECTS OF THE DRESDEN ART EXHIBIT AND OTHER POSSIBLE GDR CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS IN THE USA THAT INVOLVED PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATION.

6. ELM SAID HE WOULD REPORT THE DCM'S COMMENTS

TO HIS SUPERIORS, ADDING HE THOUGHT THEIR PROPOSAL WOULD HAVE BEEN AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION. HE WOULD REGRET IT IF THE EXHIBIT HAD TO BE CANCELLED AS HE WOULD REGRET IT IF CANCELLATION WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON FUTURE CULTURAL EVENTS. HE COULD NOT "AT THE MOMENT" ACCEPT AS A SOLUTION THE PROPOSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"SHORT FORM" FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S TITLE. HE HOPED THE EXHIBIT WOULD NOT FALTER OVER THE CURRENT PROBLEM, AND INDICATED WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC, THAT HE WOULD PROBABLY BE IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY AFTER REPORTING THE DCM'S REMARKS TO HIS SUPERIORS. DCM SAID HE ALSO HOPED THAT EXHIBIT COULD BE HELD, IT WOULD BE IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST TO BE ABLE TO CARRY ON SUCH PROGRAMS, WOULD REPORT ELM'S REMARKS, AND SAID HE UNDERSTOOD WE WOULD BE HEARING FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

7. COMMENT: THE CONVERSATION WAS SERIOUS, BUT CORDIAL AT ALL TIMES. IT SEEMS EVIDENT THE GDR IS LOOKING FOR SOME KIND OF ACCEPTABLE WAY OUT OF THE PROBLEM. ELM GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT ONE THING THAT BOTHERS THEM IN LOOKING AT VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES IS THAT THEY DO NOT WANT TO SET A PRECEDENT THAT WOULD DO DAMAGE TO THEIR PRINCIPLE THAT WE ARE "IN" THE GDR. THE STRONG LIKELIHOOD THAT THE EXHIBIT WILL BE CANCELLED IF THEY DO NOT AGREE WITH OUR SUGGESTED SOLUTION MAY CAUSE THEM TO RECONSIDER. DCM GAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT AT LEAST ELM WAS SHAKEN BY THE POSSIBILITY OF CANCELLATION. WHILE THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THAT THEY WILL AGREE WITH OUR "SHORT FORM" PROPOSAL, ELM DID NOT CLOSE THE DOOR TO IT, SAYING THEY COULD NOT AGREE "AT THE MOMENT", AND INDICATING THAT THEY WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH US.

8. NEITHER ELM NOR GEYER WAS AVAILABLE UNTIL AFTERNOON OF MARCH 15, HENCE NO MEETING WAS POSSIBLE BEFORE THEN. BOLEN

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